

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**Claims 1-15 (Cancelled)**

16. (Currently Amended) A flat-plate low-profile actuator, comprising:
- a planar conductive polymer layer extending in a longitudinal direction;
  - a first electrode in contact with the planar conductive polymer layer;
  - a second electrode disposed opposite to the first electrode; and
  - an electrolyte layer in contact with the planar conductive polymer layer, disposed in between the first electrode and the second electrode;
- wherein the first electrode is planar and comprises at least one band-like portion and at least one link portion, each of the at least one link portion extending in the longitudinal direction, each of the at least one band-like portion extending in a direction perpendicular to the longitudinal direction, and each of the at least one link portion is shorter than each of the ~~at least one~~ band-like portion; and
- wherein application of an electric potential between the first electrode and the second electrode deforms the planar conductive polymer layer such that the flat-plate low-profile actuator expands or contracts in the longitudinal ~~direction~~; direction;
- wherein the first electrode is a zigzag-shaped planar electrode.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) The flat-plate low-profile actuator as defined in claim 16, wherein the first electrode is a planar electrode, the at least one band-like portion is a plurality of band-like portions, the at least one link portion is a plurality of link portions, and the plurality of link portions connect adjacent pairs of the band-like portions.

19. (Previously Presented) The flat-plate low-profile actuator as defined in claim 16, further comprising planar extension portions disposed on two sides of the first electrode in the longitudinal direction, the planar extension portions being operable to transfer a force generated